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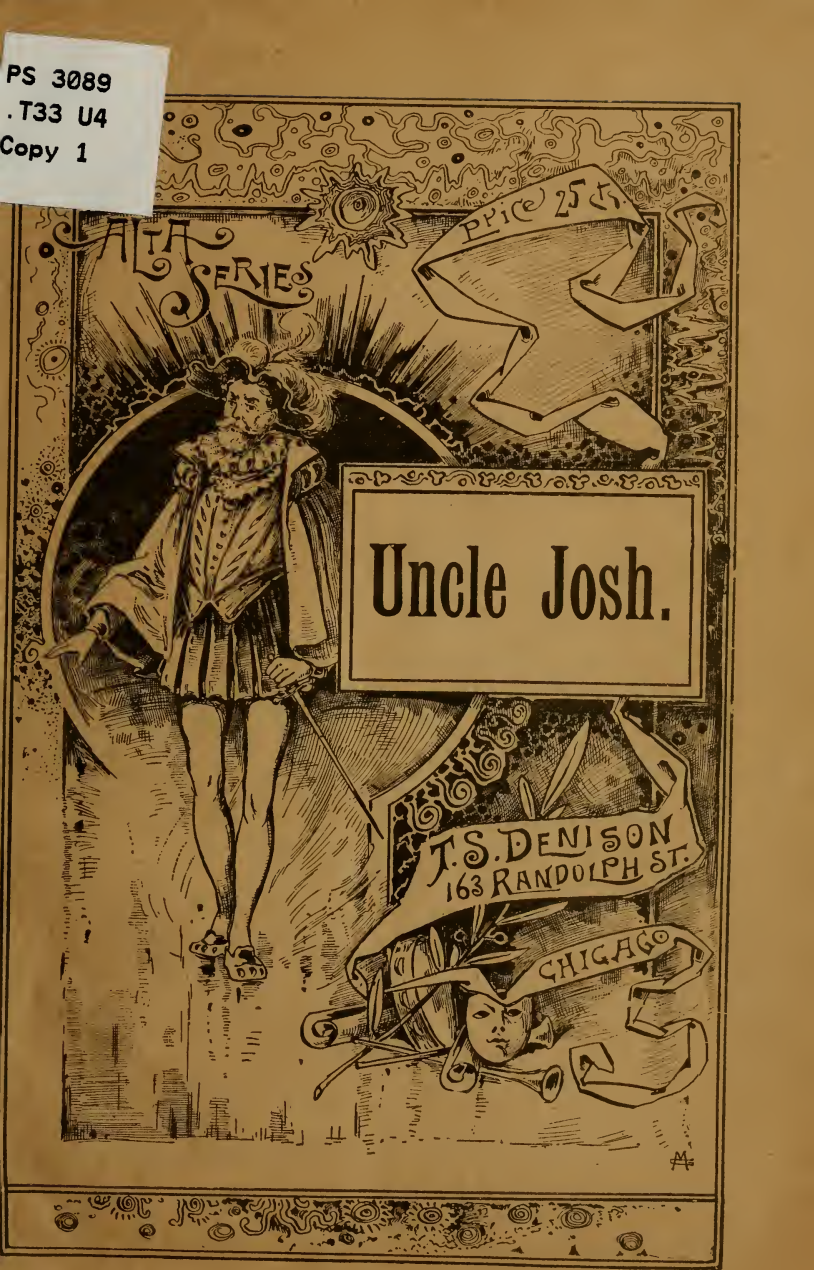

DENISON'S ACTING PLAYS.

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	M.	F.
All that Glitters is not Gold, comedy, 2 acts 2 hrs.	6	3
A Very Pleasant Ev farce, 30 m...	3	0
Assessor, sketch, 10 min	3	2
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Borrowing Trouble, farce, 20 min.	3	5
Bad Job, farce, 30 min	3	2
Bumble's Courtship. sketch, 18 m.	1	1
Bardell vs. Pickwick, farce, 25 m..	6	2
Christmas Ship, musical, 20 min...	4	3
Caste, comedy, 3 acts, 2 hrs. 30 m.	5	3
Cow that Kicked Chicago, 20 m...	3	2
Country Justice, farce, 15 min....	8	0
Circumlocution Office, 20 min.....	6	0
Chimney Corner, drama, 2 acts, 1 hr., 30 min	5	2
Cut off with a Shilling, farce, 25 m	2	1
Danger Signal drama, 2 acts, 2 hrs.	7	4
Desperate Situation, farce, 25 min.	2	3
East Lynne, drama, 5 acts, 2 hrs..	8	7
Fair Encounter, 20 min	0	2
Family Strike, farce, 20 min	3	3
Fruits of Wine Cup, temperance drama, 3 acts, 1 hr	6	4
Friendly Move, sketch, 20 min.	5	0
Home, comedy 3 acts, 2 hrs	4	3
Homœopathy, farce 30 min	5	3
Hans Von Smash, farce 30 min...	4	3
Hard Cider. temperance, 15 min.	4	2
Initiating a Granger, farce, 25 min.	8	0
In the Dark, farce 25 min	4	2
In the Wrong House, farce, 20 m.	4	2
Irish Linen Peddler, farce, 40 min.	3	3
Is the Editor In, farce 20 min	4	2
I'll Stay Awhile, farce, 20 min	4	0
Ici on Parle Francais, farce, 40 m..	4	3
I'm not Mesilf at All, farce, 25 m.	3	2
John Smith, farce, 30 min	5	3
Just my Luck, farce, 20 min	4	3
Kansas Immigrants, farce, 20 m...	5	1
Kiss in the Dark, farce, 30 m...	2	3
Louva the Pauper, drama, 5 acts, 1 hr. 45 min	9	4
Love and Rain, 20 min	1	1
Larkins' Love Letters, farce, 50 m.	3	2
Lady of Lyons, 5 acts. 2 hrs. 30 m.	8	4
Limerick Boy, farce, 30 min	5	2
Lost in London drama, 3 acts, 1 h. 45 min	6	3
London Assurance, comedy 5 acts, 2 hrs. 30 min	9	3
Lucky Sixpence, farce, 30 min	4	2
Lucy's Old Man, sketch, 15 min..	2	3
Michael Erle, drama, 2 acts, 1 hr. 30 min	8	3
Mike Donovan a farce, 15 min..	1	3
Mitsu-Yu Nissi, Japanese Wedding, 1 hr.. 15 min	6	6
Model of a Wife farce, 25 min	3	2
Movement Cure, farce, 15 min.	5	0
Mrs Gamp's Tea, sketch. 15 min.	0	2
Misses Beers, farce, 25 min.	3	3
My Wife's Relations, comedy, 1 hr	4	6
My Jeremiah, farce, 20 min	3	2
My Turn Next farce. 50 min	4	3
My Neighbor's Wife. farce, 45 min	3	3
Not Such a Fool as He Looks, comedy, 3 acts, 2 hrs	5	3
On Guard, farce, 25 min	4	2
Only Daughter, drama, 3 acts, 1 hr. 15 min	5	2
Our Country, drama, 3 acts, 1 hr..	10	3
Odds with Enemy, 5 acts, 2 hrs....	7	4
On the Brink, temperance drama, 2 acts, 2 hrs	12	3
Out in the Streets, 1 h. 15 min....	6	4
Pet of Parsons' Ranch, frontier drama, 5 acts, 2 hrs	9	3
Pets of Society, farce, 30 min	0	7
Pull Back, farce, 20 min	0	6
Pocahontas, musical burlesque, 1 hr	10	2
Parlor Entertainment, 25 min.....	2	5
Played and Lost, sketch, 15 min...	3	2
Persecuted Dutchman, 35 min....	6	3
Quiet Family, farce, 45 min	4	4
Regular Fix, farce, 50 min	6	4
Rough Diamond, farce, 40 min....	4	3
Silent Woman, farce, 25 min	2	1
Solon Shingle, comedy, 1 hr. 30 m.	7	2
Soldier of Fortune, comedy, 5 acts, 2 hrs. 20 min	8	3
Seth Greenback, drama, 4 acts, 1 hr. 15 min	7	3
Schoolma'am (The), drama, 4 acts, 1 hr. 45 min	6	5
Slasher and Crasher, 1 hr. 15 min..	5	2
Squeers' School, sketch, 18 min...	4	2
Sparkling Cup, temperance drama 5 acts, 2 hrs	12	4
Taming a Tiger, farce, 20 min ...	3	0
That Rascal Pat farce, 35 min ...	3	2
Too Much Good Thing, 50 min...	3	6
Twenty Minutes Under an Umbrella, 20 min	1	1
Two Gents in a Fix, farce, 20 min	2	0
Two Puddifoots, farce, 40 min	3	3
Ticket of Leave Man, drama, 4 acts, 2 hrs. 45 min	8	3
Turn Him Out, farce, 50 min	3	3
Toodles, drama, 2 acts, 1 hr. 15 m.	6	2
Ten Nights in a Barroom, temperance drama, 5 acts, 2 hrs...	11	5
Two Ghosts in White, sketch 25 m	0	8
Uncle Dick's Mistake. farce, 20 m.	3	2
Under the Laurels, drama, 5 acts, 1 hr. 45 min	5	4
Wanted a Correspondent, farce, 1 h	4	4
Wide Enough for Two, farce, 50 m	5	2
Which Will He Marry farce, 30 m	2	8
Won at Last, comedy, 3 acts, 1 hr. 45 m	7	3
Wonderful Letter, farce, 25 min..	4	1
Women of Lowenburg, historical sketch, 5 scenes. 50 min	10	10
Wooing Under Difficulties, 35 min.	4	3
Yankee Detective, 3 acts, 2 hrs ...	8	3

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Shadow Castle, play, 2 hrs 30 min.	5	4
Jedediah Judkins, comedy, 2 h. 30 m.	7	5
Uncle Josh, comedy, 2 hrs	8	3

T. S. DENISON, Publisher, 163 Randolph St., Chicago.

UNCLE JOSH

A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

—BY—

CHARLES TOWNSEND

AUTHOR OF

"Early Vows," "Rio Grande," "Spy of Gettysburg," "On Guard," "The Woven Web," "Border Land," "Broken Fetters," "Deception," "A Breezy Call," etc.

TOGETHER WITH CAST OF CHARACTERS, SCENE AND PROPERTY PLOTS, DESCRIPTION OF COSTUMES, ENTRANCES AND EXITS, AND ALL OF THE STAGE BUSINESS.

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CHICAGO
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163 Randolph St.

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UNCLE JOSH.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

JOSHUA JARVIS, "Uncle Josh," from Vermont. A farmer who reads the newspapers, and keeps his eyes open.

COUNT DE COURVILLE, noble in name, but ignoble in character.

GERALD MURRAY, a young New Yorker.

UPSON DOWNES, one of New York's choice "Four Hundred."

JOE CLARK, "Slippery Joe," a "bunko steerer."

MULCHAEY, a "dive keeper."

MUNSON, a detective.

ERASTUS, Mrs. Reynolds' servant.

MRS. REYNOLDS, Joshua's sister, a widow.

LETTY, her daughter, in love with Gerald.

MISS MINERVA CLACKETT, who is getting desperate.

TIME—The Present Day.

PLACE—New York City.

TIME OF PLAYING—Two hours and fifteen minutes.

12-39503

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COSTUMES.

JARVIS.—A typical "down East" Yankee; chin beard, no moustache, speaks with marked "twang." ACT I. Ill-fitting dark suit, long linen duster, straw hat with red band, turn down unstarched collar. Last entrance, no hat nor coat. ACTS II, III and IV, same as ACT I, without the duster.

COUNT.—Refined French character, accent not too marked. ACT I. Elegant walking suit. ACT II. Prince Albert suit, with silk hat, walking stick, etc. ACT III. Smoking jacket, slippers. *Second entrance*, same as ACT I. ACT IV. Evening dress.

GERALD.—ACTS I and III. Business suit. ACT II. Prince Albert suit. ACT IV. Evening dress.

UPSON DOWNES.—Extravagant "dude" dress throughout. A variety of "loud" neckties to change for each entrance.

JOE.—ACTS I, III and IV. Quiet business suit. ACT II. Rather flashy dress.

MULCHAEY.—"Sporting" rig through.

ERASTUS.—ACTS I and IV. Black "swallow-tail" coat, white tie and gloves. ACT II and III. Ordinary dress.

MUNSON.—ACTS I and IV. Business suit. ACT II. Rough dress, not too shabby. Red nose, tumbled hair, etc.

MRS. REYNOLDS.—ACTS I and IV. Rich house dress.

LETTY.—ACTS I and IV. Rich house dress. ACTS II and III. Elegant walking costume.

MINERVA.—Typical "old maid;" costume rather *bizarre*. ACTS I and IV. House dress. ACT III. Street dress.

PROPERTIES.

(*See also "Scene Plot."*)

ACT I. Salver with letter, visiting card, valise, umbrella, red handkerchief for JOSHUA, coin, dagger.

ACT II. Pack of cards, cigars, cigarette and matches for UPSON, salver and glass of "cider," bottle of seltzer and glasses, paper containing white powder for COUNT.

ACT III. Papers and letters on table, pen and ink, letter in envelope for LETTY.

ACT IV. Newspaper, coin, and small handkerchief for UPSON, very large handkerchief for ERASTUS, paper and dagger for COUNT, handcuffs.

SCENE PLOT.

ACT I.—*Scene I.* Drawing room at Mrs. Reynolds', in fourth grooves, with interior backing in fifth grooves. Doors *C.* in flat, *R. U. E.*, and *L.* 1 *E.* Chair and ottoman *L.* Sofa *R.* Carpet down. Rugs. Easy chair up *L.* All furniture, etc., rich and heavy. Stage must be clear from proscenium to first grooves, to allow for street scene. *Scene II.* City street in first grooves. *Scene III.* Same as first scene.

ACT II. Card room in Mulchaey's saloon, in fourth grooves. Doors *C.* in flat, *R.* 1 *E.* and *L. U. E.* Small tables and chair *R.* and *L.*

ACT III. Private parlor in Count's apartments, in third grooves. Doors *C.* in flat, *R.* 1 *E.* and *L.* 2 *E.* Handsomely furnished. Table littered with papers and letters, *R. C.* Chairs at table.

ACT IV. Same as ACT I, *Scene I.*

SYNOPSIS FOR PROGRAMME.

ACT I.—*Scene I.* Mrs. Reynolds' drawing room in New York. Mother and daughter. A letter from Uncle Josh. The proposal. Cross purposes. Erastus in trouble. *Scene II.* A street in the city. Mulchaey on a "bender." "Howld the sidewalk down for me!" The bunko steerer. The detective and Joe. "Take a walk." Uncle Josh arrives. Joe tries his little game. "Left." *Scene III.* Same as Scene I. A hasty

marriage. The Count overhears. Josh and the dude. "Wall by gum." Rejected. The insult. A blow. The attempted murder. Uncle Josh to the rescue. "Put 'er up, b' gosh, er I'll brain you !"

ACT II.—Card room in Mulchaey's saloon. Plotting. The tipsy dude. "Aint I—bah jove—'ic—one ther boys ?" Seeing the elephant. The decoy message. Uncle Josh in danger. The poisoned drink. Uncle Josh plays a trick. Fooled again. "I'm ther liveliest dead man you ever see."

ACT III. Count's apartments. Bills and duns. The Count and Joe compare notes. A fiendish scheme. The forgery. Letty and the Count. A plucky American girl. "I defy you." The Count shows his hand. Uncle Josh wants to fight. A surprise.

ACT IV. Mrs. Reynolds' drawing room. Erastus makes an offer. Minerva speaks her mind. "You shall see me no more." The Count asserts his power. Uncle Josh at work. "I'm not one o' the quittin' kind." The Count plays his hand. The bogus certificate. Uncle Josh makes a discovery. The detective takes a hand. The Count in hot water. A trick that two can play at. *Finale.*

REMARKS ON THE PLAY.

In order that all who take part in this play may thoroughly comprehend the characters, the author gives the following descriptions, which should be carefully studied.

JOSHUA JARVIS is a man of fifty, quick, keen, with all the sharpness of the ideal "Yankee." He is entirely ignorant of city manners and customs, and therefore makes amusing blunders wherever he goes. He is odd in speech and dress, yet is blissfully unconscious of it. This air of native simplicity must be kept up at all times, for therein lies the charm of the character. He can make up either stout or lean, red-faced or tanned—the former being preferable. The exciting business,

which closes the first three acts must be rapid, and should be carefully rehearsed.

COUNT DE COURVILLE This part requires careful work. The Count is a polished, elegant scoundrel, whose bearing must be easy and graceful at all times. He is a man of forty, quiet in dress, and a thorough gentleman in appearance. While this is a "dialect" part, yet the accent should not be too strongly marked, as this is in no sense a comedy character. The usual make-up for a Frenchman is required—black hair, eyebrows, moustache and goatee. His scenes with JARVIS must be carefully rehearsed—especially the climaxes, the success of which depends chiefly on these two characters.

GERALD MURRAY is a type of the young business man of the day. He is brisk, energetic—a high-spirited, manly young fellow, and the part should be acted in a direct, clear and positive manner. His age is about twenty-five.

UPSON DOWNES is a "dude," and that, perhaps, tells the whole story. It must be borne in mind, however, that this, like all "character" parts, must be played consistently. The drawl, the vacant stare, the limp movements, the mincing walk—all these must be kept up, or the part will be incongruous. The make-up should be pale. No beard is worn. UPSON'S age is about twenty-one.

JOE CLARK. "Slippery Joe" is very smooth and plausible in speech. He is a "bird of prey," but he never shows his talons. His make-up is pale, and he dresses quietly, except in the second act, when he wears a flashy rig to escape discovery. Age, about forty.

MULCHAEY is a type of the loud voiced, drunken "heeler," who has a political "pull." He wears a heavy moustache, dresses "loud," and sports an abundance of vulgar jewelry. His age is anywhere from thirty to forty.

MUNSON is very quiet in manner and dress, except when disguised as a "bum" in the second act. His drunken business must not be overdone, and his "asides" should be spoken

clearly, and in a natural tone. His age is about thirty.

ERASTUS is a middle-aged negro, with nothing to distinguish him particularly from servants of his class.

MRS. REYNOLDS is a woman of refinement and culture—a lady in all that the term implies. She is easy and graceful in bearing, dresses quietly, and in the best of taste. She has some very effective work, especially in the last act, and must enter freely into the spirit of the part.

LETTY is a girl of eighteen, lively, spirited, full of fun, yet withal, capable of exhibiting deep feeling. This is a difficult role, as she has such a variety of emotions to depict, and therefore should be studied with the utmost care. In the first act she is a merry, light-hearted girl; but later on when troubles throng about her, the serious, earnest side of her nature becomes manifest. Her costumes should be in the prevailing fashion, rich but quiet. She should be made-up pale for the last act.

MISS CLACKETT is the regulation "old maid" with all the assumed girlishness of her class. Her cheeks should be highly rouged, "corkscrew" ringlets may be worn, and her costumes should be somewhat loud. The part must be played with a great deal of tartness, and the longer speeches should be delivered rapidly.

SPECIAL NOTICE. On a small stage, or where no street scene can be had, the first act may be played without change, by omitting the second scene. In that case, when MINERVA seizes ERASTUS (*at the close of* SCENE I) she closes him out—whereupon MRS. REYNOLDS and LETTY enter as at the beginning of SCENE III, and the act progresses without interruption.

UNCLE JOSH.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Drawing-room at* MRS. REYNOLDS, *in fourth grooves. Richly furnished. Doors C. in flat, L. 2 E. and R. U. E. Stage clear from pros. to 1 G., so as to allow for next scene.*

Enter MRS. REYNOLDS *and* LETTY, *R. U. E.*

MRS. R. And so, my dear, you really wish to go abroad this season?

LET. Indeed I do. You know we have never done Switzerland nor the Italian lakes. And besides—

MRS. R. (*amused*). And besides, Mr. Gerald Murray is going to visit those very interesting localities.

LET. Why mamma—I—I—you know—(*sits L.*)

MRS. R. (*laughing*). Exactly my dear—I know all about it Mr. Murray is a charming gentleman and—I was young myself once.

LET. (*runs to* MRS. R.) Oh, you darling (*embraces her*). You're the best mother in the wide, wide world.

MRS. R. (*kisses her*). Thank you dear (*they sit,* LETTY *on ottoman beside* MRS. R.) But tell me, daughter. Has Gerald proposed?

LET. N–no—not yet.

MRS. R. Nor made love to you?

LET. (*injured tone*). Not very much. I'm afraid he's afraid to.

MRS. R. Ah, my dear, the bravest man hesitates to open his heart to a girl who will not be serious.

LET. Oh, but I'm scared to death whenever he begins to

talk seriously, and I have to laugh to hide my fear. It's a dreadful thing to get married.

MRS. R. Possibly. Yet I dare say cousin Minerva thinks it is far more dreadful to remain single.

LET. Poor cousin—and she tries so hard to fascinate somebody.

MRS. R. And never succeeds. The sterner sex object to being wooed, and rebel whenever the attempt is made.

LET. Because they want to do all the fascinating themselves—and a wonderful tangle they make of it sometimes. There's the Count de Courville. He places his hand on his heart, like *that*—and rolls his eyes, like *this* (*comic business*), and says in bad English and good French, that I am "von *charmante* mees, ze von lady in dis wide world zat he adores *pour jamais*." Then there is that utterly sweet Mr. Downes. He looks at me with one eye, while he holds his monocle in place with the other, and remarks: "Yaas, bah Jove, Miss Reynolds—er—don't yer know, I think, bah Jove, that you are awfully fetching, don't yer know."

MRS. R. You are not very flattering, my dear. But seriously, I wish you would discourage any attentions from the Count de Courville. I believe that he is a hard, cruel man. Besides, he has an assurance about him which I thoroughly dislike (*rises*. LETTY *goes R.*)

LET. So do I. Yet one cannot be positively rude, you know.

Enter ERASTUS, *C. D.*

ERAS. De postman jes done fotch dis letter, Mis' Reynolds.

MRS. R. Thank you (*takes letter*. *Exit* ERASTUS, *C. D.*) It is from my brother Joshua (*opens letter*).

LET. Anything special?

MRS. R. Um—I should say so. Listen (*reads*). "My dear sister, everything is doing well on the farm, so I now take my pen in hand, and set down to say as how I am well and hope you air the same. I guess I don't know of nothing

why I can't come to visit you, as I promised fifteen years ago. I'll start to-morrer morning by the first train, and I'll git thar afore sundown. I have got a new linen duster, and a straw hat with a ribbon, so I guess I'll be right in style. Your loving brother, Joshua Jarvis. P. S. N. B. I forgot to say that Mollie aint well."

LEM. Molly? Who is she?

MRS. R. I'm sure I don't know (*reads*). "She bellers from morning 'till night—"

LET. Poor woman.

MRS. R. (*reads*). "'Cause her calf got killed by the cars."

LET. Oh!

MRS. R. So he is really coming.

LET. How is it, mamma, that Uncle Josh is so different from you?

MRS. R. My dear, your uncle was a poor boy who had no chance to become polished. He was only twelve years old when our parents died, yet it was his stout heart and willing hands that made a home for us. I was finally adopted by a lady of wealth, who gave me every advantage that money could procure, while he remained to work his way as best he could. What he lacks in polish, he makes up in mother-wit and hard common sense. He is the kindest and best of men, but he is a keen judge of human nature; and whoever tries to fool him will catch a Tartar.

Enter ERASTUS, *C. D.*

ERAS. Am yo' to home, missus?

MRS. R. Who is it?

ERAS. Mistah Upside Down.

LET. You mean "Upson," not "Upside."

ERAS. Yas'm.

MRS. R. (*to* LETTY). Well—are we?

LET. Oh—yes, I suppose so.

MRS. R. We're at home.

ERAS. Yas'm (*exit C. D.*)

LET. That dreadful dude.

MRS. R. I've an idea; we will send him to meet your uncle, who will probably arrive on the five o'clock train.

Enter ERASTUS *and* UPSON, *C. D.*

ERAS. Mistah Upside Downside.

UP. (*to* ERAS.) Aw—that's not right, don't you know.

ERAS. Begs yo' parding sah, an' I—

UP. Yaas. All right. Get out. (*exit* ERASTUS, *C. D.*) Ladies, youah devoted. (*bows*).

MRS. R. We are glad to see you, Mr. Downes. Pray be seated (*all sit*). It has been quite an age since you were here.

UP. Yaas—aw—I have been to the sea shore foh a couple of days, don't you know.

LET. Ah! Then you like the sea?

MRS. R. And the bathing too, no doubt?

UP. Oh, deah no. Beastly thing, the sea. I nevah bathe.

LET. What then?

UP. Why—oh yaas—why, I put on me bathing suit, don't you know, light a cigarette, and stroll up and down the beach. I wouldn't go into the howid watah foh anything.

Enter MINERVA, *R. U. E.*

MIN. Why, how *do* you do, Mr. Downes? (*he rises*). I am so very, very *much* delighted to see you. (MRS. R. *and* LETTY *go up L.*)

UP. Yaas (*sits on sofa, R.*) What a dweadful old maid.

MIN. (*beside him on sofa*). Our hearts have been bowed down since you were away, Mr. Downes.

UP. Yaas?

MIN. And yet I fear that you are a bold, bad man, Mr. Downes.

UP. Yaas.

MIN. One whom we innocent young girls ought to shun.

UP. Yaas.

MIN. You are such a perfectly charming talker—

UP. Yaas.

MIN. That you steal our tender young hearts in spite of all that we can do.

UP. Yaas?

MIN. (*hand on heart, aside*). Sit still my heart, sit still. I feel that he is about to propose. Mr. Downes—I—

UP. Yaas.

MIN. (*bashfully*). I—I'm listening. Go on.

UP. (*aside*). Now what ails the old girl?

MIN. (*aside*). How my heart flutters.

LET. (*to* MRS. R.) I think Mr. Downes is in danger. You ought to help him.

MRS. R. Very well (*comes down*). Pardon me, cousin. Mr. Downes, will you do me a favor?

UP. (*briskly*). Yaas—bah Jove—with the greatest of pleasure.

MRS. R. I expect that my brother will arrive at the Grand Central station at five o'clock. He is from the interior, and is unused to city ways. Now if you would meet him at the station—

UP. (*rising*). Delighted, don't you know.

MRS. R. He is an elderly man, rather gray, wears a linen duster and a straw hat, and is very countryfied in manner.

UP. Aw—something of a wuwal wustic, so to speak.

MRS. R. Yes sir. He *is* a "rural rustic" as you call him, but that is nothing to be ashamed of. I was a country girl and I am proud of it. (MINERVA *goes up L.*)

UP. Of caws. I've been in the wuwal districts myself, and it's awful jolly. In the country there's gwass, and aw—milk, and flowahs and—er—picnics, and tramps. Yaas. (*goes up C.*)

MIN. Don't hurry away, Mr. Downes. There's plenty of time.

UP. Beg your pardon, but I have to go home, don't you

know, and put on me five o'clock necktie. This (*pointing to tie*), is me four o'clock necktie. (*goes up*). *Au revoir*, ladies. (*exit C. D.*)

MIN. (*angrily*). That's always the way—always the way. When a gentleman calls to see *me*, of course you must get rid of him. Oh, yes—of course. (*crosses*).

MRS. R. Why, cousin Minerva!

MIN. Well, you might let me have *one* chance, now and then.

LET. So you shall. When uncle Joshua arrives, you may set your cap for him.

MIN. (*huffily*). Thank you, Miss. But you will please remember that I am not setting my cap, as you call it, for anybody. And I want you to understand that I do not rush headlong at every man I meet, for I think such actions are very improper in a young girl of my age. And moreover, I am so shy and retiring that I can never say one little, single, solitary word when there is a man around, as you know perfectly well, even though I *do* say it—which is nothing remarkable, as everybody knows that I am not the least possible bit talkative—so there now. (*crosses*).

Enter GERALD, *C. D.*

GER. Good-afternoon, ladies. I took the liberty of—

MIN. Why, how do you do, Mr. Murray? I am so very, very *much* delighted to see you!

GER. (*coolly*). Thank you. (*joins* LETTY).

MIN. (*straightens up*). Well! What *she* can see in *that* young man, gets me. I can't bear the sight of him. (*exit R. U. E.*)

GER. Miss Clackett seems angry.

LET. Yes. She thinks mamma has been throwing stones into her matrimonial fish-pond.

MRS. R. Do not laugh at her, dear. You know that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." (*goes R.*) Poor Minerva is getting desperate. (*exit R. U. E.*)

LET. Now you see what you have done.

GER. What have I done?

LET. Of course. You have trifled with Minerva's affections!

GER. Trifled with your great-grandmother's affections! Why, Letty, I never did anything of the sort.

LET. I suppose not. My great-grandmother has been dead for thirty years.

GER. I was speaking of your cousin.

LET. At all events, she was very glad to see you.

GER. That's nothing. She would be glad to see the King of the Cannibal Islands, I dare say.

LET. Well, I'll bet that you have said soft things to her.

GER. Nonsense! You know better. Perhaps you judge me by that frog-eating, French humbug who is here so much.

LET. (*pretending to reflect*). Let me see: Frog-eating—humbug? Now who in the world *do* you mean?

GER. I mean that jumping-jack who calls himself the Count de Courville.

LET. Jumping-jack? You are certainly not very complimentary toward my friends.

GER. That fellow is not your friend. I believe that in spite of his rank, he is only an unprincipled adventurer.

LET. But the Count is very handsome and distinguished.

GER. I should like to *ex*tinguish him.

LET. Why should you speak in this way?

GER. Why? Because I love you, Letty, with all the love of a true man's honest heart. (*arm around her, takes her hand.*) Because I want you all for my own little wife, dearer to me than all the world.

LET. Oh, Gerald, you take my breath away.

GER. Do I? Then I'll give you some of my own. (*kisses her.*) What do you say, dear?

LET. I say (*sees* ERASTUS *approaching.*) Oh, bother (*crosses.*)

Enter ERASTUS, *C. D.*

ERAS. De Count de—de—suffin; dar's his card. (LETTY *takes it*).

GER. Not at home.

LET. Stay—(*to* GERALD). I will send my cousin to entertain him.

GER. Very well.

LET. Admit him.

ERAS. Yas'm. (*exit C. D.*)

GER. But you haven't answered me yet, dear. Wont you say "yes?"

LET. Well—ye—s—(*teasing*). I—guess so. (*they go R.*)

GER. Ah, you little rogue. How you love to tease a fellow. (*exeunt R. U. E.*)

Enter COUNT, *C. D.*

COUNT (*looking off R. U. E.*) So! My rival ees here, eh? I like not zat. Pah! Should I care? No. Ze Americain ma'amzelle will be mine when I say so—or if she refuse me—vell, I make her sorry she ever live. *Parbleu!* She be not such a fool as to make of me an enemy And zen—why, she want my rank and title—I want her money and her own loafly self. It ees von bargain.

Enter MINERVA, *R. U. E.*

MIN. (*aside*). There he is—waiting for me. How my timid little heart flutters. Ahem! (*he turns*). Ah, Count. (*bows*).

COUNT (*bows profoundly*). Ah, ma'amzelle.

MIN. (*bows profoundly*). Count!

COUNT (*same business*). Ma'amzelle!

MIN. (*same business*). Count!

COUNT (*short bow*). Ma'amzelle! (*aside*). I vonder is she vound up?

MIN. Ah, Count, I am so very, very *much* delighted to see you.

COUNT. Yes—and it be of mutual delight. (*aside*). Ze old paint shop.

MIN. (*aside*). What a charming man. (*aloud*). You flatter poor me.

COUNT. I? No, nevair. Zat is too much impossible.

MIN. Then this house really has some attraction for you?

COUNT. Some attraction? Ze greatest in ze world. My hope, my life ees here.

MIN. (*aside*). Oh, I *know* he is going to propose.

COUNT. Could I but feel that my lofe it be returned—

MIN. You may, Count, you may.

COUNT. *Charmant!* You make of me so happy. So ma'amselle Letty—she give to you her confidence?

MIN. Letty? What has she to do with it?

COUNT. To do? Why all to do. She zat I adore—

MIN. (*screams*). Ah! You wretch! You villain!

COUNT. (*surprised*). Pardon me, ma'amzelle—I comprehend not—

MIN. You deceiver—you base, base deceiver! (*down a little*).

Enter ERASTUS, *unseen by* MINERVA, *R. U. E.*

COUNT. (*aside*). *Au diable!* I better make von skeep. (*exit C. D.*)

MIN. I'm going to faint—ah—ah! (*staggers, is caught by* ERASTUS. *She sees him. Springs up, catches him by the collar and shakes him. Scene changes*).

SCENE II. *A city street in first grooves. Enter* MULCHAEY *drunk, L. 1 E.*

MUL. Begorry, I'm full. Me name is Mulchaey an' I'm drunk. Mr. Mulchaey, aint ye ashamed av yerself? Yis I om. Phat did yes git loaded for? Faith I dunno. Yer a fool, ye air Mr. Mulchaey. Yer a liar. Go home an' put yer head in a bag. Yis sor. (*Sings.* AIR: "*Battle Cry of Freedom*").

Mary had a little lamb, its fleece was white as snow.
Shouting the battle cry of freedom,
An' iverywhere that Mary wint, the lamb was sure to go,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.
Hurrah thin for Mary, hurrah for the lamb,
Hurrah for the little sheep, that didn't give a—continental.
Rally round the flag boys, rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom. (*goes R.*)

Aisy now! Hould the sidewalk down for me, somebody. Stiddy—Mulchaey—stiddy. (*Meets* UPSON *at R. 1 E., flings him L., and exit R.*)

UP. Oh, murdah! What a wude, wough man. And how unpleasant his breath was. I wondah if he disarwanged me five o'clock necktie? (*looks L.*) Bah Jove. Here comes some one. I'll awsk him.

Enter JOE, *L. 1 E.*

Beg pardon my friend, but aw, is me necktie all wight?

JOE. Correct to a dot.

UP. Thanks awfully. You see I met a vawy unpleasant fellah just now, and I was afwaid he had mussed me up; and I was on me way to the station to meet an old fellah who is coming on the five o'clock twain, and—

JOE. Yes? Who is he?

UP. A wustic fellah named Jarvis, from Vawmont, who is coming to visit his sistah, Mrs. Reynolds.

JOE. Well, you have plenty of time. I'm employed at the Central station, and the five o'clock train is an hour late.

UP. Yaas? Then I'll have time to wun home, doncher know and put on me six o'clock necktie. Thanks awfully. (*exit R. 1 E.*)

JOE. Talk about country jays. If there is any bigger gull than a New York dude, I'd like to invest. That was a regular la la of a steer he gave me. (*enter* MUNSON *quietly, L. 1 E. unseen by* JOE). Let me see. An old farmer named Jarvis

from Vermont, coming to visit his sister, Mrs. Reynolds. Wont I work him? Well, my name aint Slippery Joe if I don't. Now as an opener, I'll just--

MUN. (*close to him*). Take a walk.

JOE. (*turning*). Sir!

MUN. Oh, I'm onto you, Joe, big as all out doors.

JOE. (*frightened*). Why, Mr. Munson, I didn't know--

MUN. That you were talking out loud, and giving yourself dead away? I ought to run you in for that, if nothing else.

JOE. But I've done nothing.

MUN. All right. But I think, Joseph my boy, that I'll see you down to the next corner. Trot along. (*Exeunt R. 1 E. as* JOSHUA *enters L. 1 E.*)

JOSH. Wall, by gosh. (*drops valise and umbrella, and wipes face and hat band with large handkerchief*). Ef this don't jes' beat ther deuce, as ther feller said when he plunked down ther three spot! I'll be teetotally consarned, ef I haint clean plumb flabbergasted! Lost my sister's address like a consarned chump, an' dinged ef I know what ter du. Guess folks aint much acquainted here in New York. I asked ther conductor whar she lived, an' b'gosh he didn't know! Neither did ther ticket seller at ther depo'. Told me ter look in a dictionary. By ginger! I'd a licked that feller for a cent.

Enter JOE, *quickly*, *R. 1 E.*

JOE. I gave that cussed shadow the slip for once anyhow.

JOSH. Say, young man, be you acquainted much around here?

JOE. Somewhat. (*aside*). It's my pigeon, sure enough. (*aloud*). If I am not mistaken, you are Mr. Jarvis, from Vermont.

JOSH. June bugs an' grasshoppers! How on airth did yer know?

JOE. Easily enough. I am intimately acquainted with your sister--Mrs. Reynolds. I just came from her house. She was

not feeling well, and asked me to meet you. So come on. (*starts R.*)

JOSH. Well I declare! (*aside*). I don't jest like his looks. He's too iley. (*aloud*). Whar's she living now? I've plumb lost her address.

JOE. Oh—over on the avenue.

JOSH. (*aside*). Ketched him ther fust thing. She don't live on no avenue. B'gosh! He's a bunko steerer.

JOE. Come, Mr. Jarvis. Your sister will be waiting.

JOSH. Say, young man, what's yer name?

JOE. Why, my name is Smith, sir—John Smith. I am Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association.

JOSH. That's a thundering lie.

JOE. Sir!

JOSH. Oh, don't git on yer high hoss, Mr. Bunko Steerer.

JOE. Eh? (*threatening*). Don't be so flip, you old muff, or I'll break a hole in yer face.

JOSH. (*shaking him*). Yer will, eh? Will yer? Better let out that air contract. (*hurls* JOE *to his knees*). Now look a here, yer young whipper-snapper. I don't read ther newspapers fer nothin'. I'm up to these bunko tricks bigger'n a wood chuck (*jerking him to feet*). Now git—for my left foot is jest itchin' ter set yer up in ther leather business.

JOE. (*at L. 1 E.*) You cursed old hayseed! I'll get even with you for this, even if I do time for it. (*exit L. 1 E.*)

JOSH. Vamoose! Sorter took ther wind out er his sails. Wall, I'll mosey along. (*picks up valise and umbrella*). I'll find a hotel an' git a boy ter hunt up my folks.

Enter UPSON, *R. 1 E.*

Bullfrogs an' pollywogs! I wonder ef it's alive? Say, be you allowed ter wear them clothes right out doors?

UP. Aw—aw—yaas—weally—

JOSH. Tongue tied, eh? Knowed a feller up in Varmont troubled ther same way. It's wuss'n rheumatics, by gum.

UP. Aw—I beg your pawdon, but—er—

JOSH. Great snakes! Du speak er say suthin'.

UP. Yaas. If you come from Vahmont, perhaps you may be Mr. Jarvis.

JOSH. P'r'aps. An' p'r'aps I may be ther angel Gabriel.

UP. Yaas. If you *should* be Mr. Jarvis, youah sistah, Mrs. Reynolds—

JOSH. Sent you ter meet me, eh? By gum! It's another of them bunko fellers! But who'd a thunk it.

UP. She awsked me to meet you don't you know.

JOSH. She did, eh? Now look a here. You take this satchel and carry 'er right straight to my sister's. Don't you try ter run off with it er I'll jab ther pint of this umbrella (*shakes umbrella*) right through yer gizzard.

UP. But I caunt do it, you know. Bah Jove I—

JOSH. Shet up! Pick 'er up. (UPSON *does so taking both hands*). Put 'er on yer shoulder. (*he does so*). For'd march. (*they go R.*)

UP. Oh, I'll call a policeman—me life's not safe.

JOSH. Dry up! Ef you say another word I'll ram my umbrella down yer consarned throat, an' spread 'er wide open. (*Exeunt R.* 1 *E. Scene changes.*)

SCENE III. MRS. REYNOLDS' *drawing room, same as before—Discovers* MRS. REYNOLDS *and* LETTY *seated on sofa.*

MRS. R. And so, my dear, you are engaged?

LET. Yes—I suppose so.

MRS. R. You suppose so?

LET. Well, I *guess* I said "yes." Gerald wouldn't give me a chance to say anything else. And "no" is a dreadfully big word, especially when you don't want to say it.

MRS. R. You have made a good choice, and I hope you will be happy.

LET. How dull and formal marriages are nowadays. There is never a touch of romance about them.

MRS. R. For which you should be truly thankful. These romantic, hasty marriages are seldom happy. I ran away with Mr. Reynolds (COUNT *listens at C. D.*) we found a clergyman on the train, who married us at the rate of forty miles an hour. In the hurry and confusion I lost or mislaid the certificate, and as we could trace neither clergyman nor witnesses all the usual proofs were lacking.

LET. Why did you not get married over again?

MRS. R. Your father spoke of having the ceremony repeated, but it was delayed from day to day, until it was too late—for he died suddenly within a year. In his will, he left everything to me, as his wife, which of course was proof enough.

COUNT. (*aside*). Ah, was it? Perhaps not. (*disappears*).

LET. Uncle should be here by this time. (*crosses*).

MRS. R. Possibly Mr. Downes was unable to find him.

LET. More likely he couldn't find his five o'clock necktie.

Enter ERASTUS, *C. D.*

ERAS. Mistah Upside Down an'—

JOSH. (*outside*). Go right along, young feller.

ERAS. Here dey come!

Enter UPSON, *carrying valise, and* JOSH., *C. D.*

JOSH. Here we air, b'gosh! (*exit* ERAS. *R. U. E.*)

MRS. R. Brother—

JOSH. Wall, by gum! (*kisses* MRS. R.) I'm glad to see you.

MRS. R. (*introducing*). My daughter, Letty.

JOSH. Why, how you've growed! (*kisses her*). Talk erbout honey. Why you're sweeter'n all ther maple sugar in Varmont biled down.

UP. (*still holding valise*). Oh deah!

MRS. R. Why, Mr. Downes, what's the matter?

UP. I'm dead.

JOSH. Put 'er down. (UPSON *drops valise*). Easy, consarn ye. There's a bottle of maple syrup in that air satchel, an' ef you've broke it, I'll bust yer head.

LET. Oh, Uncle!

UP. I'll have him awested for assault an' battery.

JOSH. Git out! A feller can't commit 'sault an' battery 'cept on a man, an' b'gosh I hope you don't call yerself one. You see, sis, I met a bunko man up near ther depo', an' arter I run him off this dood blowed along an' pertended ter know me. I kinder thought he didn't know enough to be a bunkoist but to make sure I obleeged him to carry my satchel.

MRS. R. That was wrong, brother.

JOSH. Wall, p'r'aps it was. Say, young feller, here's five cents fer yer trouble. Don't fool it away now.

UP. (*throws down money*). This is an insult. (*goes up*). I'll get even with him, if it costs me twenty-five cents. (*exit C. D.*)

JOSH. (*picks up money*). A fool and his money is mighty soon parted. The idea of a feller throwing away five cents. It's agin ther laws of natur'.

MRS. R. We dine at six, brother, so if you would like to go to your room—

JOSH. Dinner at six o'clock? Geewilikens! When do you git supper?

MRS. R. We rarely have supper, unless we are out.

JOSH. Then you must hist in a pile o' breakfast ter last all day.

MRS. R. Ah, but we have luncheon at mid-day.

Enter ERASTUS, *R. U. E.*

Take Mr. Jarvis' valise to his room.

ERAS. Yas'm.

JOSH. Hold on—say—be you a bunkoist?

ERAS. He, he! No sah—I dunno sah. I reckon not

JOSH. Wall, handle that satchel mighty keerful.

ERAS. Yes sah. Dis way, sah. (*exit C. D.*)

JOSH. Jest holler when dinner's ready, an' I'll be on deck. (*exit C. D.*)

LET. Oh dear, he *is* a diamond in the rough. What shall we do with him?

MRS. R. Treat him as we would the most polished gentleman in the world. He is my brother, remember, and however uncouth his dress or manners, it shall pass unnoticed. (*goes up*). We never know when we may need a friend, and he is one on whom we can rely at all times. (*exit R. U. E.*)

LET. Mamma is right, of course—but, oh dear! I wonder what Gerald will think of him?

Enter COUNT, *C. D.*

COUNT. Ah, ma'amzelle, I am of great delight to see you.

LET. Why, Count, I thought you had been frightened away,

COUNT. By ze ancient maiden? *Mais oui!* She frighten ze Old Niek himself. I beat a retreat—I make vot you call von skeep out. Zen, ven she be gone, I return. I must have some private converse to you alone.

LET. Not now, Count. I must beg you to excuse me.

COUNT. Pardon me. Ze time ees now. I have told you of my lofe for you. I give you rank, a title—I make of you ze Countess de Courville. Shall I have zat honor?

LET. Thank you, Count, but I must decline.

COUNT (*aside*). *Diable!* She refuse of me. (*aloud*). You know not vot you say. I hope ma'amzelle you be not so foolish.

LET. I certainly would be foolish to marry a man for whom I care nothing.

COUNT. And you care not to be a lady of rank?

LET. American girls are not always hunting for titles.

COUNT. No? But suppose one of zem have no name of her own?

LET. What do you mean, sir.

Enter GERALD, *C. D., remaining up.*

COUNT. I mean zat ven one's parents are not married ze person ees no more zan a—

GER. (*comes down*). Silence! You contemptible scoundrel.

COUNT. Yees. Zare ees a—lady—present. (*goes L.*)

GER. And her presence alone protects you. (*beside* LETTY, *R.*)

LET. Please don't quarrel with him, Gerald.

COUNT. Ah, I see. You have no name of your own, ma'amzelle, so you seek one of zat young fool.

GER. Leave the room, you cur.

COUNT. So? Ah, Mees Nobody. (*comes C.*) Must I—

GER. You hound! (*strikes* COUNT, *who staggers back.* GERALD *turns to* LETTY). Forgive me dear—I couldn't help it.

COUNT (*L.*) A blow! (*draws dagger and starts toward* GERALD).

Enter JOSHUA, *quickly, C. D.*

JOSH. (*threatens* COUNT *with chair*). Put er up b'gosh, er I'll brain you.

Quick Curtain.

R. LETTY. GERALD. JOSHUA. COUNT. *L.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Card room in* MULCHAEY'S *saloon in fourth grooves. Doors C. in flat, R.* 1 *E. and L. U. E. Cards, tables and chairs, R. and L. Discovers* MULCHAEY *and* JOE *playing cards at table, L. Both are smoking.*

MUL. Don't be shy now—come, ante up, ante up.

JOE. I pass, I tell you.

MUL. The divil yes do! Look here, Joe, me by, why is it that ivery toime I stay, ye pass; and whiniver ye stay, I'm not in it?

JOE. It's because neither of us can pluck the other. It's no use, Mul. You and I can't play poker against each other.

MUL. Right ye air, me beauty. Now I'll play ye a square game o' siven up, for the drinks—no chatin', moind, on aither side.

JOE. (*pushing back cards*). Hang the cards.

MUL. Ye can't do it, me by; and thare's where the pasteboards have the best av it—for they've bin the manes av stringin' up minny a mon.

JOE. I know a couple of men I'd like to string up.

MUL. Yis? Who now?

JOE. Munson, that infernal detective, for one.

MUL. Amin.

JOE. And that blasted hayseed for another.

MUL. Hayseed?

JOE. Yes. A fellow named Jarvis, from Vermont. He queered me like an old rounder, yesterday.

MUL. Ye don't mane it? An' did he work yez?

JOE. No, blast him—but I couldn't work *him*.

MUL. Begorry—an' what ailed ye?

JOE. Oh, I was all right; but the blamed old duffer had been reading the newspapers, and he tumbled too easy.

MUL. Thare should be a law agin lettin' country payple rade noospapers. It's demoralizin' our business. Aven a daycint, respictable saloon kayper loike mesilf, can hardly git elicted alderman nowadays, betwane the opposition, the noospapers and tiuperance cranks.

JOE. Oh, drop politics. I want a chance to "do" that "jay."

MUL. Thin take a sand bag an' do him. Don't sit thare growlin' like a dog wid a sore hid.

Enter COUNT, *C. D.*

COUNT. Gentlemans, I bid you ze good evenings.

MUL. Glad to see ye, me by. How goes the world wid ye?

COUNT. Ze vorld? It ees no go.

MUL. Ye don't say! Sit down now an' relate yer grayvance. (COUNT *sits at back of table*). Has yer schame wid that young leddy taken a tumble?

COUNT. Tumble? I take ze tumble. He loafer he get before me, and I get—vot you say—

JOE. Fired out.

COUNT. *Oui*—fired out by zat ole provincial—curse him!

MUL. What the divil's a provincial?

COUNT. Stoopid! Ze ole farmer.

MUL. Ah, ah. The very man we were sphakin' about.

JOE. Is that straight?

MUL. Honest Injin, me by. Me frind here had a bit av a cotillion wid the same ould rhooster.

JOE. I'd like to make him dance to another tune.

MUL. Thin why not try the sand-bag jig?

JOE. It's too risky.

COUNT. I remind me of a better plan zan ze bag of sand.

MUL. Out wid it.

COUNT. He go about to see ze sights. Ver' likely he come here. He drink. In zat drink I drop von leetle powder, zat makes him fall asleep.

JOE. That cuts no figure.

COUNT. Bah! You see nossing. Ven he sleeps ve open ze man hole of ze big sewer. See? He float away and ze tide carry him out.

MUL. It's a foine schame, but I'm not in it.

JOE. You will be though.

MUL. Not by a dom soight. I don't moind doin' a mon in the usual way, but to drown him in a sewer—faugh!

JOE. Do you remember the fellow whose neck you broke?

MUL. I did it wid me fist in a fair foight, and I—

JOE. Dumped him in the sewer afterward. It's no use Mul. We're all in the mud together.

COUNT. Is it a bargain?

MUL. I suppose so. But may the divil fly away wid yez for drivin' me into it.

Enter UPSON *and* ERASTUS, *C. D.*

UP. (*tipsy*). Wastus!

ERAS. Yes sah.

UP. Shay—ic—aint I—bah Jove—ic—one ther boys?

ERAS. Spect yo' am sah.

UP. Whoo!

MUL. Be gorry! Moind that now. A dude on a bust.

COUNT. Ze fool! Come, Joseph. (*they exit L.*)

UP. Wastus!

ERAS. Yes sah.

UP. Stan' still, cawn't you? Wun me to a seat.

ERAS. Yes sah. (*helps him to seat*).

MUL. Has he been smellin' av a schooner o' beer?

ERAS. No sah. Some ob de boys done loaded a glass ob pop, sah, an' he was drunk afore he knowed it. Darfore, he's done got me to took care ob him. (UPSON *lurches*). Stiddy, sah.

UP. Wastus:

ERAS. Yes sah.

UP. Where—ic—where am I?

ERAS. You's all right, sah.

MUL. Better chuck him into a keb an' take him home—or hire him out to a musayum. (*goes up*). I niver heard before av a dude havin' brains enough to be effected by licker. (*exit L.*)

UP. Wastus?

ERAS. Yes sah.

UP. I—ic—wanter fight. (*hat falls off*).

ERAS. Yes sah. (*replaces hat*).

UP. I'm—ic—I'm bad man. (*same business*).

ERAS. Yes sah. (*same business*).

UP. Blood'n me eye. (*same business*).

ERAS. Yes *sah*. (*bangs hat on* UPSON'S *head*).

UP. Wastus !

ERAS. Yes sah.

UP. Shut—ic—shut up. (*tries to light cigarette, but fails*).

ERAS. Yes sah. Come erlong sah. (*jerks* UPSON *to his feet*). It's time fo' yo' ter be put ter bed. (*goes up*). Yes sah. (*aside*). It's pow'ful 'sponsible to be tookin' car' ob a New York 'ristocrat out on a buster. (*exeunt C. D.*)

Enter JOE *and* COUNT, *L.*

JOE. Talk about luck. We're in it. That old jay is coming right in here.

COUNT. But zat cursed Murray ees along—and he knows me.

JOE. I'll have Mul pipe him off. Take a sneak now and I'll tip you the cue when the coast is clear.

COUNT. Be of care you make no slip. (*exit L.*)

JOE. (*crosses and sits R*). Now, my country friend, your name will soon be Dennis.

Enter JOSHUA *and* GERALD, *C. D.*

JOSH. Sorter tony, aint it ?

GER. Very. One of our city law makers runs this dive.

JOSH. It orter be powerful respectable then. Let's set down. (*they sit L.*) I'm clear tuckered. These air stun sidewalks air tough on a feller's corns.

GER. Well sir, what do you think of the city ?

JOSH. Think ! Great snakes ! Haint had no time to think, yet. It's nothin' but slam, whang, bang, rush, crowd, push and holler like a passel o' lu*nat*ics. Why's everybody in sech a consarned hurry for, anyhow ?

GER. Because they haven't time to go slow.

JOSH. Well, I'm dry as ther inside of an oven. Let's have a glass o' cider. Hi ! (*pounds on table*). Hello ! Somebody.

Enter MULCHAEY, *L.*

MUL. Yis sor.

JOSH. What's cider wuth?

MUL. By the barrel or at retail?

GER. Two. (*exit* MUL., *L.*)

JOSH. But I say—

GER. It's all right, sir. This is on me.

JOSH. All right—only you orter figgered on the price afore-hand. He may charge five cents a glass, fer all we know.

GER. That's correct.

JOSH. *What!* Five cents fer a glass o' cider? By gum! Why, up in Varmont you kin git all you want ter drink fer nothin'. Seem ter me these air barkeepers air mighty stingy.

GER. Oh, no they're not. They sell whisky at ten cents a glass and throw in a big head in the bargain.

Enter MULCHAEY, *L., with cider and glasses.*

MUL. Here ye are sor. (GERALD *pays him*). By the way, are yez Mr. Murray?

GER. Yes.

MUL. I tho't so. Well, a messenger by wint past a bit ago yellin' as how thare wor a big fire on Thirty-fourth strate jist beyant Fifth avenue, and I tho't—

GER. (*aside*). Letty lives there! No mistake?

MUL. Divil a wan. (*goes up*).

GER. You must excuse me, sir. I must leave you for a short time. Remain here until I return.

JOSH. Keerect.

GER. (*aside*). Keep your eyes open. (*goes up*). No funny work with him, Mulchaey—you understand?

MUL. An' what the divil do you take me for?

GER. For a man who will bear watching. (*exit C. D.*)

MUL. He's a sharp man. But he'll nade to ate a pile o' razors to be sharp enough to cut me, bedad.

JOSH. (*drinks*). Hum! Pretty durned good. Never

tetched his neither. Wont du ter waste it. (*empties other glass*).

MUL. (*aside*). What an opening fer apple juice.

Enter JOE *and* COUNT. *They sit at table, R.*

JOE. Waiter!

MUL. Yis sor.

JOE. A bottle of champagne.

MUL. (*aside to him*). Come off the roof. Take gin an' seltzer.

JOE. Come off yourself.

MUL. That's all ye'll git on me.

JOE. Very well, then. (*exit* MUL., *L.*)

JOSH. Slick lookin' fellers. Wonder who they be?

COUNT (*to* JOE). Begin ze vork.

JOE. I say, my friend, would you mind joining us?

JOSH. Wall—I dunno. What's ther damage?

JOE. Nothing at all. I foot the bill.

JOSH. Yer du? Wall, then, I'm willin' ter be sociable. (*sits at head of table facing audience*). I'm a friendly critter in sech a case. Who might yer be when yer to hum?

JOE. My name is Williams. I'm a detective.

JOSH. Perlice, eh! That's good. A feller allers feel safe when ther perlice are around. Who's 'tother feller?

JOE. This is General Duploy—an officer in the French army, who is seeing the American elephant.

JOSH. Glad ter know ye.

COUNT. Ze pleasure ees mutual sair.

JOSH. I'm Joshua Jarvis, esquire—a Justice of the Peace up ter hum in Varmont.

COUNT. A magistrate? Sair, I am honored.

JOSH. Seein' ther elephant, be you? Say, 'tween you an' me an' ther tater patch, aint ther American elephant a purty gay ole bird?

COUNT. So he be. I see nossing like to him in France.

Enter MUNSON, *disguised as drunken tramp.*

MUN. Hooray! Whoop! Down—'ic—down with pauper labor. 'Tection fur 'Merican industry! Whoop! (*staggers down L.*)

JOSH. Snakes an' lizards! What ails him?

JOE. Bug juice. (MUNSON *sits at table, L.*)

COUNT. I sink he be two sheets in ze vindmill, eh?

MUN. (*sleepily*). I—'ic—I aint drunk. I'm er free born—'ic—born 'Merican citizen. No flies—'ic—on me. (*bows head on table pretending to sleep*).

JOSH. He seems tired, b'gosh he duz.

JOE. He is. Got too heavy a load.

Enter MULCHAEY, *L., with bottle of seltzer and glasses.*

MUL. Here ye air, gents.

JOSH. By gum! (*takes bottle*). What's this thing?

JOE. Seltzer. Press the handle. (JOSH *does so and the water flics out of his glass*).

JOE. Thunder!

COUNT. *Diable!*

JOSH. Jerusalem! (*wiping face*). Why didn't you say she was loaded?

COUNT. (*aside, brushing clothing*). Ze ole fool.

JOSH. Say, ef it's all ther same ter you, I'll take cider.

JOE. Same for me.

MUL. All roight, gents. (*exit L.*)

JOSH. Who'd a thunk that carnsarnded thing would shute like that? (COUNT *rises and goes up*).

JOE. It's charged with gas, sir.

JOSH. Gas? I thought it was biled gunpowder.

COUNT. (*shaking* MUNSON). Vake up here—vake up. Come! *Sacre!* It be of no use. He have his jag.

JOSH. I s'pose you perlice have lots o' trouble with them air fellers?

JOE. Not when they are well corned.

Enter MULCHAEY, *L., with two glasses of cider on salver. During the following,* COUNT *empties powder into one glass.* MUNSON *observes it.*

JOSH. What's done with 'em?

JOE. The patrolmen dump them into cart and roll them off to the station. Next day they usually get ten dollars or thirty days.

JOSH. Great snakes! Wall, I'd take ther ten dollars.

MUL. Here ye air gents. (*gives drugged cider to* JOSH).

COUNT (*to* MUL.) Good. Now ve be on ze look out.

MUL. (*points to* MUNSON). But the bum?

COUNT. Nevair mind him. He has a cargo. (*they exit L*).

JOE. (*raises glass*). Here's luck.

JOSH. (*stopping him*). Wait a minute. When cider costs five cents a glass, yer wanter go slow.

JOE. Oh, hang the expense. (*places his hat on table*). Here goes.

MUN. (*aside*). I'll put a stop to that. (*rises, staggers over to them*). Shay—'ic—shay, gents, aint I in this? (*they both lower glasses without drinking*).

JOE. You couldn't get another drink down with a pile-driver.

MUN. Bring on yer pile driver. (*knocks* JOE'S *hat to the floor*). 'Scuse me, boss.

JOE. You clumsy fool. (*stoops down for hat*).

MUN. (*quickly changes glasses*). It's drugged. Keep mum.

JOSH. Keerect.

JOE. (*places hat on table*). Now skip.

MUN. All ri', blowed tough luck. Reg'lar—'ic—reg'lar freeze out. (*staggers up C.*) Goo'—'ic—goo' night. (*exit C.*)

JOSH. Good-night. (*aside*). Suthin's up' b'gosh. Wonder what 'tis. (*aloud*). Wall, here's my regards. (*drinks*).

JOE. Drink hearty. (*sips a little*).

JOSH. This air cider tastes sorter queer.

JOE. It's all right. Drink it down.

JOSH. Wall, 'twouldn't du ter waste it. (*empties glass*).

JOE. (*aside*). Now we've got him.

JOSH. Jumpin' bullfrogs! That seems ter go all through a feller. Say—I'd think you folks (*yawns*) would die off young.

JOE. Why?

JOSH. Fer lack o' sleep. (*yawns*). I never slept a wink last night fer ther noise.

JOE. Oh, we all get used to that in time.

JOSH. (*sleepily*). Wall, I can't hold my eyes open. (*yawns*). I'm gittin' powerful (*nods sleepily*) powerful sleepy.

JOE. (*aside*), That must have been a strong dose.

JOSH. (*nodding*). Five cents a glass. Set 'em up agin. (*drops head on arms, pretending to sleep*).

JOE (*aside*). His goose is cooked. (*goes L.*) Hey! All O. K.

Enter COUNT *and* MULCHAEY, *L.*

COUNT (*cautiously*). Ze drug it vork, eh?

JOE (*same business*). Dead sure. 'Sh! Is the coast clear?

MUL. (*same*). Yis—all riddy. (MUNSON *appears listening at C. D., unseen by others*). Begorry, me by, I'll have nothin' to do wid any dirthy work—moind that now.

COUNT. Ze diable take you.

MUL. Faith he wont whin ye air by.

JOE. Shut up, both of you. Here, Frenchy, grab hold. (COUNT *and* JOE *seize* JOSHUA, *when*)

Enter GERALD, ERASTUS *and* LETTY, *C. D.*

LET. (*rushing to* JOSH). Uncle! Uncle! Wake up! He never moves. Oh, Gerald, they have killed him! (JOE *drags* COUNT *L., as* LETTY *enters*).

JOSH. (*springing up, goes C.*) Not much, b'gosh! I'm ther liveliest dead man you ever see.

Quick Curtain.

R. LETTY. GERALD. JOSH. MUL. (*up L.*) COUNT. JOE. *L.*

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Private parlor in the* COUNT'S *apartments, in third grooves. Richly furnished. Doors C. in flat, R. 1 E. and L. 2 E. Table, littered with papers and letters, R. C. Discovers* COUNT *seated at table.*

COUNT. (*looking over letters*). "Your account must be paid at once."—So? Get it if you can. (*takes another*). "Oblige us by an early settlement."—Anuzzer dun—bah! (*takes auother*). "Sair, I need money."—So do I. I be at ze end of ze rope. If I get no money soon—pouf! Ze jig it be up. Curse zat ole farmer. He escape me. Vell—he prove nossing. And as for ze girl, I have her tight. To save a scandal she must marry me. I send her ze little note zat will bring her here. (*knock C. D.*) *Entree.*

Enter JOE, *C. D.*

Ah, Joseph. How do you feel, eh?

JOE. Rocky.

COUNT. Rocky? By zat you mean—

JOE. Played out—done up—let down—coppered.

COUNT. Ah, *oui*—yes—so am I.

JOE. It was a close call we had last night. Sure you drugged the stuff?

COUNT. No meestake about zat. I never blunder zat vay.

JOE. Perhaps the old duffer tumbled and changed the glasses when I wasn't looking. Anyhow, I spilled the other glass, so they have no proof.

COUNT. Joseph, you are von breek-bat.

JOE. What's the next scheme?

COUNT. Keep still—say nossing. I have here (*shows paper*) ze leetle scheme zat vill make everything go my own vay—zat ees if you help to do ze job.

JOE. Want my help, eh? What's in it?

COUNT. A thousand dollars.

JOE. What's the racket?

COUNT. Here. (*shows paper*). Mrs. Reynolds have no marriage certifeecate. I show ze reason. I make out by zis paper zat her husband have anuzzer wife at ze time he marry her. Zis be a certifeecate of his first marriage. You and I sign as ze vitnesses.

JOE. I see. A bit of forgery, eh? (*examines certificate*).

COUNT. *Oui.* You do not stop at forgery?

JOE. Not if you give me an agreement, stating the facts.

COUNT. You doubt my honair?

JOE. Stuff. Don't talk about honor, to me.

COUNT. Vell. (*writes*). I give you ze agreement. (*writes*).

JOE. (*aside*). I'll have a dead grip on the slippery cuss, or it wont work.

COUNT. Here, read. (*gives paper*).

JOE. (*reads aloud*). "One month after my marriage with Letty Reynolds, I promise to pay Joseph Clark the sum of one thousand dollars." Good enough, so far as it goes. Now just add to that: "For swearing to the marriage certificate of the late James Reynolds and M'lle Lucette Dubois, the certificate of which was forged by me."

COUNT. Paff! You sink I run my head in ze nooze like zat? No sair. (*crosses*).

JOE. Then go to the devil with your forgery. (*goes up*).

COUNT. Stop! Here, I sign. (*writes*).

JOE. (*aside*). I've got him, anyhow.

COUNT. (*writing*). "Forged by me." Zare, I hope it satisfy you.

JOE. (*examines paper*). Correct. Now I'll sign your paper. (*signs*). Do you think it will work?

COUNT. To be sure. Remembair, zat marriage take place in France, twenty years ago. How old be you?

JOE. In years or experience?

COUNT. Oh, nonsense.

JOE. Well, then, I'm thirty-eight.

COUNT. Good. You were zen traveling in France for

pleasure. You remembair all ze particulars. Mr. Reynolds—tall, fair, blue eyes, blonde. Ma'amzelle Lucette, slight and dark. Zey marry in Paris. You and I ze only vitnesses.

JOE. What a gorgeous liar you are, Count. Munchausen cuts no figure with you.

COUNT. Nevair mind zat. When ma'amzelle Letty find zat I prove by zis paper zat she be not a legal child, she vill marry me quick, to save exposure. (*pockets certificate*).

JOE. Great scheme. I'm dry. Got any liquids?

COUNT. Plenty of it in my cabinet. (*goes L.*) Come. (JOE *exit L. 2 E.*) Now I have her in spite of any ole farmer. (*exit L. 2 E.*)

Enter ERASTUS, *C. D., after knocking.*

ERAS. (*at C. D.*) Nobody to home? Come in Miss.

Enter MINERVA, *C. D.*

MIN. Oh, Erastus, I—I'm so frightened.

ERAS. Dar's no danger, Miss. No man 'ud hurt yo'. (*aside*). Golly! Like ter see any man try it—dat's all.

MIN. I wonder where that villain is?

ERAS. Mebbe he's done got skeered an' dusted when he seed yo' comin'. (*aside*). Mos' any man would, I reckon.

MIN. Perhaps he did. He would not dare to face an innocent young girl like me. (*aside*). I heard Letty say she must come here, and I consider it my duty to learn *why*. Not that I care anything about it, for I am not a person to meddle with other people's affairs, nor to pry into matters that don't concern me. (*at table*). I wonder what all these letters are about? (*looks at* ERASTUS, *who does not observe her*). I think it's my solemn duty to look at some of them. Not that I ever pry into—(*opens letter*). Well, of all things! This letter is written in French or Latin or Dutch or some other dead language. It's an outrage. I can't read a word of it. (*crosses*).

ERAS. (*comes down*). Dis ar' Counter puts on heaps o' style.

Wonder ef he's ter home? Reckon I'll vestigate. (*goes L.*)

MIN. Erastus? (*he stops*). I'm shocked. The idea of prying about in that way. Do you think *I* would do such a thing?

ERAS. Yas'm—I mean no mum. Co'se not. (*goes up C.*)

MIN. I guess I better be going. Letty must have changed her mind—and I wouldn't have it known I was here for the world.

ERAS. (*at C. D.*) Oh, Miss Nervy, dar's somebody comin'.

MIN. Land sakes! Oh, what shall I do? Hide me, Erastus, hide me.

ERAS. Yas'm—whar abouts?

MIN. Anywhere—don't be a fool.

ERAS. Kin—kin you git unner de table?

MIN. You idiot. Here, quick! Come this way. (*goes R*). Come. (*exit R. 1 E.*)

ERAS. 'Scuse me. I reckon I better stay right where I is.

Enter LETTY, *C. D.*

LET. Erastus!

ERAS. Yas'm.

LET. Why are you here?

ERAS. Why—I—I sorter kim to look arter dis yar Counter. Reckoned he mought be up to some mo' tricks.

LET. You must tell no one that you saw me here.

ERAS. Yas'm, I wont. (*goes up*).

LET. What *does* this letter mean? (*reads*). "If you would save your family from disgrace, you will make a visit to me at once and all alone. You will say no word of this to any one, at the risk of immediate ruin. Count de Courville." What dreadful mystery is this?

Enter COUNT *and* JOE, *L. 2 E.*

COUNT. (*speaking as he enters*). Now you understan' eversing?

JOE. Dead sure. (*sees* LETTY). Hello! You've hooked your fish.

COUNT. Good. Now skeep.

JOE. Tra-la. (*goes up, runs against* ERASTUS). Get out of my way, Coal tar. (*pushes him aside and exit C. D.*)

ERAS. I'd like ter smash him—I would fo' a fac'.

COUNT. Mees Reynolds —I am delighted—it was so kind of you for to come. Pairmit me. (*offers chair*).

LET. Thank you. I prefer to stand.

ERAS. Yas sah. We bofe prefers to stan'.

COUNT. You here—you black beggar?

ERAS. Ise no beggar, sah. I arns an hones' libbin'—an' dat's more'n *you* kin say.

COUNT. I break off your stupid neck.

LET. Count!

COUNT. Ah, ma'amzelle—pardon me—I forget zat he be your servant, and I assure you zat—

LET. Very well. May I ask the meaning of this letter?

COUNT. Certainly. But to you alone, and in private can I explain.

LET. Very well, sir. Erastus, you may go.

ERAS. Yas'm. (*going—aside*). Dar's sumpin up, har, suah. I'll go an' tell de folkses. (*exit C. D.*)

COUNT. Now, ma'amzelle, you know zat I am your friend—zat I lofe you, and—

LET. Enough of that. Explain this letter if you please.

COUNT. Zat ees vot I am about to do. You are proud, ma'amzelle—you hold your family name above all sings else?

LET. Yes.

COUNT. Good. Zen you do anysing to save your name from disgrace?

LET. I fail to understand you.

COUNT. So? Zen I make myself clear to you. Your mother she have no marriage certifeecate. Why? Because, ven Mr. Reynolds marry her he have a vife already.

LET. (*crossing*). That is a comtemptible falsehood.

COUNT. So? (*shrugs shoulders*). I expect you say zat.

LET. Yes—and I repeat it, Count de Courville. Do you think to frighten me by a cowardly attack on my dead father's name? I'll hear no more, coward that you are. (*goes up*).

COUNT. Pardon me. If you leave now, ze story goes into ze newspapers, backed by ze proof zat I hold.

LET. The proof?

COUNT. I said so. I have it here—ze certifeecate of your fader's marriage to Ma'amzelle Dubois, one year before he marry your mother. (LETTY *sinks into chair, L.*) You read French. See for yourself, (*holds paper before her*).

LET. (*looks at paper*). Supposing this were true, his first wife might have been dead.

COUNT. So she might. But she did not die, though your fader leave so her shamefully. I be her friend—her countryman; I see her marry your fader, and after he abandon her she write me all ze sad story. (*takes letter from pocket*). By chance I keep ze letter. See—shall I read it to you?

LET. (*aside*). Oh, my father. Can this be true?

COUNT. Your mother be not a legal wife· you be not a legal daughter.

LET. (*springing up*). You infamous scoundrel! I defy you.

COUNT. Here! No more of zat. I be patient, but I stand no more such talk. Defy me? Bah! You know not vot you say. Defy me? Do it; and in twenty-four hours ze whole city know your history. Ze sensational newspapers take it up. Vot you think your society, your friends say ven zey know, eh? It be a choice morsel for ze gossips to roll under zare tongues.

LET. (*weeping*). Oh, father, father.

COUNT. Come, ma'amzelle—be of good heart. Say but ze vord and I destroy all proof.

LET. What shall I say?

COUNT. Zat you marry me, and say nossing of zis interview.

LET. But Count, I cannot—

COUNT. Enough. It is ze only alternative; for, mark me, if you refuse, you know ze consequence. (*goes up L.*) Some one comes! Quick—decide.

LET. I—I promise. Oh, where can I hide?

COUNT. *Charmante!* (*leads her L.*) Zis vay—in here. I call you soon.

LET. (*aside*). Oh, Gerald, Gerald! My heart is broken. (*exit L. 2 E.*)

COUNT. Victory! She make a plucky fight. Zat ees vot I like in ze American girl.

Enter GERALD *and* JOSH., *C. D.*

COUNT. *Diable!* Vot brings zem here?

JOSH. We've treed our 'coon, b'gosh. Whar's Minervy?

GER. And wher's Miss Reynolds?

COUNT. I know not vot you mean.

JOSH. That's a gol durned lie.

COUNT. Sare?

JOSH. Don't git on yer high hoss with me, er I'll make you think a Varmont cyclone's got loose. I'm an onhitched blizzard when I'm riled, an' I'm gittin' mad! *Whar be they?*

COUNT. Leave ze room, you ole fool, or I make you.

JOSH. Hey! (*flings off coat*). I'll jest—

GER. (*stopping him*). Keep cool, sir. We'll find them. (*goes to R. 1 E. and opens door. Enter* MINERVA). Miss Clackett!

JOSH. Christopher Columbus! The nigger told the truth.

COUNT. (*L.*) I know nossing of zat ole female voman.

MIN. I—I came here to find Letty.

GER. I dare say.

JOSH. Wall, we'll see ef she's here. (*goes to L. 2 E.*)

COUNT. (*interposing*). Stop, I tell you.

JOSH. (*flings him aside*). Get out—er I'll spile yer. (*opens door L. 2 E. Enter* LETTY). Limpin' Jehosaphat! An' here she is.

GER. Letty, what is the meaning of this? (MINERVA *goes up R.*)

COUNT. It be none of your affair.

GER. Sir.

COUNT. Vell, be it so very strange zat a lady call on her *fiancé*?

GER. You mean by that?

COUNT. I mean zat I be ze happy man.

GER. You liar!

COUNT. Bah, you fool! Ask ze lady herself.

GER. (*takes her hand*). My darling, look him in the face and tell him that his words are false.

LET. Oh, Gerald, I—I cannot.

GER. You cannot? (*turns away*).

LET. Forgive me, Gerald. I have promised to marry him, and I—I—. (*faints*).

COUNT. Ma'amzelle. (*approaches*).

JOSH. Stand back! Er I'll knock yer blasted head off.

Curtain.

R. MINERVA. COUNT. JOSH. LETTY. GERALD. *L.*

ACT IV.

SCENE—MRS. REYNOLDS' *drawing-room, same as before. Discovers* ERASTUS *seated up R. C. back to audience.*

ERAS. (*drowsily*). Yas'm—Ise comin'. (*yawns*). Now! (*turns around*). 'Clare to goodness ef I aint been ersleep! Fings am gittin' wusser'n wusser'n wusser. Dat ar' Counter seems ter be runnin' ebberyting in dis house, an' nobody else aint got nuffin' ter say, nohow. Oh–h! I'd like ter git at him wiv er razzer, I would. Wouldn't I slice him up? Wouldn't I stop his jabber? I jes' reckon. I aint jest got no sorter use fer a man wot can't talk United States grammar—atically. No use, sah—no use.

Enter MRS. REYNOLDS *and* MINERVA, *R. U. E.*

MRS. R. Has *he* been here this evening, Erastus?

ERAS. You mean de Counter? Hasn't come yit.

MRS. R. If he should call, Letty will be unable to see him. The poor child is suffering terribly with nervous headache.

ERAS. Yas'm. Mis' Reynolds, 'taint none o' my business, but ef yo' says de word, I'll frow him plumb outer de winder, er turn a razzer loose onto him.

MRS. R. Not for the world. Treat him politely. That is all.

ERAS. Yas'm. (*going*). Oh-h—I'd like jes' one chance. (*exit C. D.*)

MIN. Cousin, what power has that man over Letty?

MRS. R. I cannot imagine. It's so sudden—so unexpected. When she came home yesterday looking so heart-broken, and told me she had accepted the Count de Courville, I could scarcely believe my ears. Poor Gerald is nearly frantic with rage, and my brother says—

MIN. I know what he says, and his language is perfectly awful.

MRS. R. Who can blame him?

MIN. Nobody. *Oh!*—I wish I were a man, sometimes, so that I could swear. (*crosses and exit L.*)

Enter LETTY, *R. U. E.*

MRS. R. (*going to her*). My poor child. Are you feeling better?

LET. (*seated R.*) Somewhat, although my head aches dreadfully.

MRS. R. I cannot bear to see you suffer like this. Why have you thrown Gerald over? Why have you promised to marry that—

LET. Hush, mother—don't ask me. I cannot tell you, indeed I cannot.

MRS. R. But I do ask you, dear, and you should tell me.

You have had no secret from me before, and now, of all times, you should confide in me.

LET. Oh, mother, if I only could. But I have given my word, and cannot, dare not break it.

MRS. R. You surely do not wish to marry the Count de Courville?

LET. I would sooner marry the most wretched beggar on our streets. But my own heart cannot speak. I have promised to marry him and I must keep my word.

MRS. R. But if your word was plighted through compulsion, there is no moral law to bind it.

LET. You may be right.

MRS. R. I am sure of it. Confide in me, dear, and I am sure that with Gerald's help—

LET. Gerald! Ah, how he must despise me. But there, mother, say no more, I have pledged my word to silence. I have steeled my heart to this—this sacrifice, and for my sake, for yours also, let us bury the past. I must marry the Count de Courville—I tell you I *must!* There is no possible way to avoid it. (*crosses*).

MRS. R. (*sinks into chair*). My poor child, my poor child.

LET. (*beside her*). There, there, mother, cheer up. It's not so very dreadful after all. I'll—I'll be a Countess, you know, and all our friends will congratulate me on making such a splendid match, while all the girls will be green with envy. Haven't I a brilliant future?

MRS. R. You frighten me, Letty. If you marry that man it will kill you.

LET. (*aside*). The sooner the better.

MRS. R. You cannot deceive me. You love Gerald Murray, you despise the Count, and as sure as there is a just God above us, you shall not ruin your bright young life through his evil power. I shall forbid him the house; I shall set the police to work to fathom this mystery—

LET. And disgrace us forever.

MRS. R. Disgrace?

LET. Yes, disgrace. You have no idea of that man's fiendish cunning, nor of his terrible power. The sword of Damocles hangs over our heads, ready to fall at any moment. Therefore, say nothing, do nothing—at least, for the present.

MRS. R. Well, if you think it is for the best—

LET. I am sure it is. Promise me then.

MRS. R. I promise.

LET. That's a dear. (*kisses her*). It's all for the best.

MRS. R. Can I help you in any way?

LET. No, thank you, dear.

MRS. R. Then excuse me for a short time. (*goes R.—aside*). I promised, but I'll keep my eyes open, just the same. (*exit R. U. E.*)

LET. (*looks off R. U. E.*) Poor, dear mother. For her sake! For her sake! (*sits L.*) How will all this end? If I marry the Count, I save our name from the disgrace he threatens, though I darken my own life forever. And what will my friends think? What will Gerald say? He will believe me faithless, scheming, unworthy of an honest man's love. Oh, I cannot endure it, I cannot, I cannot! (*quickly*). Would I not do better to brave all—to defy that man? (*rises*). I can. I will. (*goes up C.; pauses*). But no. His proofs are too strong; and the disgrace would kill my mother. (*comes down R.*) Come what will, I must bear the burden alone.

Enter GERALD, *C. D.*

GER. Letty! (*embraces*).

LET. Oh, Gerald!

GER. You would not see me, yesterday, my darling, but now that we have met, tell me that you were not in earnest—that you were frightened when you made that avowal.

LET. I was frightened; but Gerald, it can make no difference. (*goes L.*)

GER. (*R.*) What?

LET. It is true. I have promised to marry that man, and I must do it.

GER. You must? Are you under compulsion?

LET. Don't ask me—please don't—for I can tell you nothing.

GER. There is some mystery here. You have been driven to this.

LET. It is—it is my choice.

GER. Do you mean to say that you no longer love me? (*pause*). Then you throw me over to secure a title. You trample on my heart as a worthless thing, a broken toy, which has amused you for an hour, only to be cast aside for a new fancy.

LET. Ah, Gerald, if you only knew how unjust, how cruel you are.

GER. You do well to charge *me* with injustice—you whom I loved dearer than life itself—you whom I looked upon as an ideal woman, incapable of deceit. Why, it is enough to make me doubt the angels in heaven.

LET. (*aside*). How he must despise me—and I can say nothing.

GER. Very well, Letty. (*goes up R. C.*) Marry the Count. Secure a title. And when this polished, elegant, noble scoundrel has dissipated your fortune—when he drags you down to his own level, or failing in that, casts you adrift with contemptuous scorn—then you may recall this day and suffer, perhaps, what I suffer. (LETTY *sits weeping.*) Good-bye. You shall see me no more.

Enter COUNT, *C. D.*

COUNT (*L. C.*) Vell sare—vot are you doing here?

GER. (*R. C.*) I am looking at a cur, that calls himself a man.

COUNT. *Sacré!* If I but had you in Paris for an hour.

GER. (*with quiet intensity*). An hour? I can thrash a dog in five minutes. Do you understand?

COUNT. I fight not of ze fist, and I scorn to bandy more talk. Ma'amzelle, order him to leave ze house.

GER. Quite unnecessary. I have already said adieu Once more then, good-bye.

LET. Good-bye. (*exit* GER., *C. D.*)

COUNT (*comes down*). I have enough of zis. I request zat if he come here again, he be forbidden to enter; also zat your uncle leave.

LET. Do you, indeed?

COUNT. Shall I say, I command? So be it, zen. See zat you obey.

LET. (*rising*). Count de Courville, this is not your house. You may force me to marry you by the contemptible use of your power, but I am not your slave, and I dare you to try to make me one.

COUNT. Bravo! Zat ees genuine high tragedy.

LET. Enough, sir. (*goes up R.*) You have my promise, remember, but if you goad me further (*at R. U. E.*) I will risk all to expose you, trickster and coward. (*exit R. U. E.*)

COUNT. I do not sink zare'll be much honey in our honey-moon. But I care not. Bah! It be *money* and *not* honey zat I be after. But I forget not all she say to me. Coward, trickster, villain, eh? Ah, good. I put all her insults and abuse at compound interest, and ven ze time comes I repay it all in full. Ah, yes. I have a good memory, a most excellent memory, and I make sings very interesting for people who insult me. (*exit R. U. E.*)

Enter UPSON *and* ERASTUS, *C. D.*

UP. Wastus, I'm in a dweafful hobble.

ERAS. Dat so sah?

UP. Yaas. Look here, Wastus, did you tell anybody of the condition I was in the other night?

ERAS. No sah.

UP. Are you—aw—sure?

ERAS. Dead sartin. Why, sah, ef de bredren in my church knowed as how I'd been a cavortin' wiv you, sah, dey 'ud disciplin' me suah's yo' bo'n—praps dey'd turn me outer de church. Our s'ciety am pow'ful s'lect, sah.

UP. Yaas. Well, it's got out, somehow, and I'm wuined foh life. (*takes paper from pocket*). Here's that dweadful *Evening Howler* got it all in. Listen. (*reads*). "Mr. Upson Downes, a shining light of dudedom, who is celebrated for the fact that he knows enough to come in when it wains—"

EARS. Dat's a libel, sah.

UP. Yaas. (*reads*). "and also, that aftah years of study, has learned to tie his own necktie—"

ERAS. I'd hab 'em 'rested, sah, 'deed I would.

UP. Yaas—but then, I *can* tie my own necktie, don't you know.

ERAS. Oh, den ob co'se it's all right.

UP. Yaas. (*reads*). "went out to paint the town wed the other night. He dwank a pony of beeah, also a glawss of pop, and wound up by eating a bag of peanuts. The wesult was that he was soon in a vawy hilawious condition." Was I?

ERAS. Oh, yes sah. You wus dreffle hilaricus.

UP. Say, did I change my necktie that night?

ERAS. Only twice, sah.

UP. And how long did my—aw—wazzle dazzle last?

ERAS. Five hours, sah—from seben to twelve, sah.

UP. (*sits*). Five hours. And only two neckties. That completes my disgwace. (*presses very small handkerchief to eyes*). It bwings tears to my eyes.

ERAS. It's dreffle sah, dreffle. (*uses very large handkerchief*).

UP. (*rising*). Wastus, here's ten cents. Don't you evah tell *any*body about the neckties, and I'll give you moah, some day. Can't you let me out by the side door? I don't want to meet anybody, don't you know. I am utterly cwushed.

ERAS. Yas sah. Dis way, sah. (*they go L.*)

UP. And Wastus—

ERAS. Yas sah.

UP. I wegister a solemn vow, that I'll nevah, *nevah* get dwunk on peanuts again, so long as I live. (*exeunt L. 2 E.*)

Enter JOSH. *and* GERALD, *C. D.*

JOSH. No you don't. I'm agoin' ter see this here thing out, an' you're agoin' ter stay tu, b'gosh, 'till we know what's what.

GER. But my dear sir, I tell you that nothing will come of it.

JOSH. Think so? Wall, young folks air mighty smart, but we ole 'coons git thar sometimes jist the same.

GER. It will do no good to see Letty again. She cares nothing for me.

JOSH. Git out. Think I haint got no eyes? Why, that air girl's heart is dead sot on you.

GER. It looks like it.

JOSH. Don't be sarcastical.

GER. If she cares for me, why should she break the engagement—why has she accepted that infernal frog-eater?

JOSH. How wide is a river, how deep is a well, how long is a piece of rope?

GER. (*turns away*). Nonsense.

JOSH. Look a here, my dear feller, my questions air jest as sensible as yourn. Ef we know'd what's what, thar'd be no more trouble.

GER We can learn nothing, so we may as well quit.

JOSH. Not by a dum sight. I'm not one o' ther quittin' kind. I've sot out to git to the bottom o' this, an' I'm going plumb down. I've had ther perlice on ther jump fer the past twenty-four hours, diggin' out facts 'bout this air Count an' his pals, an' we're likely ter have a surprise party fust thing you know, as will play hob with somebody. I'm pizen when they get me riled up.

GER. You think the Count tried to murder you?

JOSH. You guessed it the fust go.

GER. Have you any proof?

JOSH. Ef I had, d'you s'pose I'd be standin' here talkin'? Great snakes! I'd be arter him like a king bird arter a hen hawk. Yes sir-ee. It's proof that I'm waitin' for—an' when I git it thar'll be a bustin' big airthquake sot loose.

GER. And you think Letty has been driven to this?

JOSH. Sartin' as two an' two make four.

GER. Then I will remain.

JOSH. Now you're showin' a little hoss sense. Course you'll remain.

Enter COUNT, *R. U. E.*

COUNT. And of course he vill not.

JOSH. (*aside*). Hello! Ther frog air croakin'.

COUNT. So you come to sneak back here again, eh? I did suppose you have sense enough to know zat ma'amzelle Reynolds laught at you as von leetle big fool.

GER. (*starting toward him*). By heaven—

JOSH. (*stopping* GERALD). Hold on—leave him to me.

COUNT. To you? You ole hombogs. All I leave to you, ees ze time to pack up and leave ze house.

JOSH. (*to* GERALD). Ask my sister and niece to come here.

GER. Very well. (*exit R. U. E.*)

COUNT. Vot you mean, eh?

JOSH. Set down an' I'll tell you. 'Twont take long. (*they sit at opposite sides of table*). Say, Count, d'you know anything 'bout American law?

COUNT. (*startled*). American law? No sare, and I do not wish to.

JOSH. Don't, eh? Wall, can't say es how I blame you much. You see, Count, American law air sorter mixed. Out West they hang a man fust, an' try him arterward—'ceptin' he's been 'busin' a woman er stealin' a hoss, when they hang him anyhow. Down in Jarsey they hang men on gineral principles; sometimes they string up ther wrong feller, but he

prob'ly desarved it, er he wouldn't ben livin' in Jarsey. Here in York State they don't hang men at all, but (*with meaning*), when a feller tries blackmail er murder, they send him ter State's prison and--

COUNT. (*rising*). Sare! I endure no insinuations.

JOSH. Set down.

COUNT. But sare. I tell you--

JOSH. (*sternly*). Set down! (COUNT *sits*). Now, jest what your little game is here, I don't know, and I don't keer. But it won't work--not by a consarned jugful.

COUNT. Ah, but it vill.

JOSH. (*ponnds table*). Yer lie, condemn yer!

COUNT. (*rising*). Sare!

JOSH. (*rising*). Set down! Set down, er I'll strangle yer.

COUNT. (*sits*). Vell--go on.

JOSH. I guess not. You're ther one that's goin', an' yer goin' mighty sudden. (*both rise and come down*).

COUNT. And vere do I go? I tell you. I go to ze newspaper office. Ze New York newspaper love a sensation. I tell zem how ze fashionable Madame Reynolds be not married to ze man whose name she bears—zat she be his mistress and her daughter a—

JOSH. (*throttles* COUNT, *forcing him to his knees*). You lyin' whelp!

Enter GERALD *quickly, R. U. E., followed by* LETTY *and* MRS. REYNOLDS. *They go L.*

GER. (*rushing to* JOSH.) Stop, sir! What are you doing?

JOSH. I'm wonderin' wether this snake is wuth killin'.

GER. You must not.

JOSH. Wall—git up. (COUNT *rises and goes R. front.*)

MRS. R. Brother, what is it?

JOSH. I'll tell you. That air thing (*pointing to* COUNT), was lyin' about you, an' I choked him.

COUNT (*quickly*). It be no lie. I say you be not ze vife of ze Reynolds, for he had von at ze time.

MRS. R. That is a cowardly falsehood.

COUNT. Paf! I know Reynolds. I see him married. And here I have ze proof. (*shows certificate*). You read it? (MRS. REYNOLDS *crosses, takes certificate*). Read it carefully, and zen tell me how you like it.

MRS. R. It is true—it is true! (*aside*). Oh, Letty, my child!

JOSH. Keep up yer pluck. Let me have a look at it. (*takes paper.* MRS. R. *returns L. and sits.* LETTY *stands beside her*). I've married no end o' folks to home in Varmont, an' I guess I know when these things air reg'lar.

COUNT. Read it zen—if you have enough sense.

GER. I understand now, Letty. But I don't believe him.

LET. Oh, thank you, Gerald.

JOSH. Wall, I'll be gosh fired! (*scratches head*). This air's a tarnal mess. Aint no sense to it. It's all Dutch.

COUNT. (*aside*). Dutch? Ze old fool—he make my stomach seek.

GER. It's French, sir. Let me see it. (*takes paper*).

JOSH. French? Wall, French is Dutch to me.

GER. Who is Joseph Clark?

COUNT. An American gentleman who see ze ceremony.

JOSH. Is it straight?

GER. (*sadly*). I am afraid so.

JOSH. (*takes paper*). Wall, in that case he's got us.

COUNT. Yes sare. I have ze upper hand. Be good enough to return ze certifeecate and get out.

JOSH. (*examines paper closely*). Say—when did this marriage take place?

COUNT. Twenty years ago—see ze date for yourself.

JOSH. And this here paper was signed then?

COUNT. To be sure.

JOSH. (*waving paper*). Whoop! Hooray! Three cheers an' a tiger!

COUNT. Vot ails ze ole fool now ?

LET. Uncle, what is it ?

JOSH. Forgery—that's what

ALL. Forgery ?

JOSH. You bet. Oh, you sly, sneakin', frog-eating furriner, I've got yer now. Why, you thunderin' idjit, this paper was made by ther Varmont Paper Mills; thare's the trademark es plain as day—an' they've been in business only five years.

COUNT. *Perdition!* I'm done.

JOSH. Guess yer be—done brown. And what's more, you'll be black and blue purty soon. (*pulls up sleeves*).

MRS. R. Let him go, brother—let him go.

Enter MUNSON *and* JOE, *C. D.*

MUN. Not just yet, madam. I have something to say to this—gentleman.

COUNT. Who are you, sare ?

JOE. Who is he ? Hear the infernal blab. Let me get at him. The lying cur that he is.

MUN. Easy, Joseph, easy. I'll take care of him.

JOSH. (*to* MUNSON). Everything fixed ?

MUN. Dead to rights. I made Joe believe that the Count had blabbed, so he turned state's evidence.

COUNT (*aside*). I like not ze looks of sings. I better make von skeep. (*goes up*).

MUN. Not just yet, Count.

COUNT. Dare you stop me ?

MUN. Got to. Attempted murder is an ugly charge—and you must answer for it, my beauty.

JOSH. And so is forgery. Give him the whole charge, Mr. Officer, fer we wanter roast him in first-class style.

COUNT. Stand aside ! Stand aside, I tell you now !

JOSH. Mighty sassy, aint he ?

COUNT. *Sacré!* I show you. (*draws knife and rushes at*

JOSH. *A brief struggle. Knife drops.* JOSH. *throws* COUNT *and kneels on him*).

JOSH. Gimme your handcuffs. (MUNSON *does so*). Thar! (*handcuffs* COUNT *and lifts him to his feet*). When you git out er jail, come up ter Varmont an' I'll learn yer how ter rassle. Wont charge yer nothin' neither.

COUNT. You have ze best of me now, but I soon be free, and zen I square ze account.

JOSH. All right. Come round in twenty or thirty years er whenever yer git out, an' I'll make it interesting.

COUNT. Ah, you ole—

MUN. That's enough. Sorry to have such a fracas here, but business is business. Good-day. (*exit with* COUNT *and* JOE, *C. D.*)

MRS. R. Brother, you have saved us.

GER. You have given me a wife. (*embraces* LETTY).

LET. And me a husband.

JOSH. Then I haint got nuthin' left ter dú, more'n to give my blessin', cos ther laws o' Varmont don't 'low me ter splice folks in York State. (*comes down a little*). But ef you, er any of your friends, wanter be married slicker'n greased lightnin', fer two dollars, come up to Varmont, an' I'll do it in maple sugar style.

Curtain.

R. GERALD. LETTY. JOSH. MRS. R. *L.*

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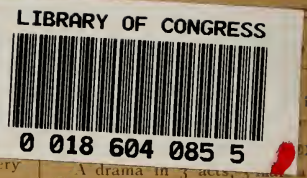

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